

### In memoriam

The ASSA noted with great sadness the passing away of Professor Bert Myburgh on 7 April 2010.

Prof. Myburgh was the Head of Surgery at Wits for many years – a surgeon par excellence. Countless numbers of surgeons, students, and registrars went through his hands and he trained many prominent surgeons who are leaders in various fields of surgery in South Africa and abroad. He also contributed enormously to the practice of surgery both locally and abroad. His incisive mind and legendary skills and knowledge will be greatly missed by the surgical community.

The Association takes this opportunity to pay tribute to Prof. Myburgh and recognises and acknowledges his enormous contribution to surgery in South Africa and indeed internationally. We extend our deepest condolences to his family.

Drs Donald Mokotedi and Frikkie van der Merwe also passed away recently. They were both members of ASSA.

Dr Mokotedi worked as a senior surgeon at the Sebokeng Hospital. Dr Van der Merwe worked as a surgeon at Wilgeheuwel Hospital.

The ASSA notes with great sadness their untimely deaths, which are a big loss for the Association, and takes this opportunity to send its sincerest condolences to their respective families.

### Trip to ASGBI

The Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland (ASGBI) held its annual conference in Liverpool from 14 to 16 April at the BT Convention Centre, Liverpool.

The ASSA was represented by its President, Professor Sats Pillay, and Chairman, Professor Martin Veller. The meeting was highly successful and ties between ASSA and ASGBI were strengthened.

### Professor Madiba – new position

As the ASSA extended executive committee is made up constitutionally of the executive committee and the academic heads of departments of surgery, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Professor Thandinkosi Enos Madiba on his new appointment as head of the Department of General Surgery at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and to wish him well in this new position.

### SA Society of Surgeons in training

The South Africa Society of Surgeons in Training (SASSiT), which was launched at the beginning of this year and is affiliated to ASSA, continues to flourish, with membership having increased to 124 registrars and still counting.

The Association's first seminar day on colorectal cancer was held on 10 April in Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Cape Town.

The Society has also published the second edition of its quarterly newsletter, *The Needleholder*, with a focus on endoscopic surgery. Topics covered include establishing oneself as a laparoscopic surgeon in the public sector, and reviews of procedures using this technique, including colorectal surgery, gastric bypass and hernia repair, among others.

Source: [www.sassit.co.za](http://www.sassit.co.za)

### Tanzania to implement surgical safety checklist nationally

Tanzania has become the first, and so far only, African country to have mobilised resources to implement the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist on a national scale.

The aim of the checklist, the latest edition of which was published with its accompanying implementation manual in September 2009, is to improve the safety of surgical care

around the world by ensuring adherence to proven standards of care. The list comprises 19 items to check three times – before induction of anaesthesia, before skin incision, and before the patient leaves the operating room.

There are also efforts by the International Organization for Women and Development (IOWD) to bring the checklist to Niger.

Source: [www.safesurg.org](http://www.safesurg.org)

### Upcoming events

The Wits Biennial will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre on 24 - 26 May 2010.

The 38th Annual Meeting of the Surgical Research Society of Southern Africa will be held at East London Health Resource Centre on 15 - 16 July 2010 after the Ethicon Annual Surgical Registrars Symposium on 13 - 14 July.

The Sages 2010 Congress will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre from 29 to 31 July 2010.

### The International Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association

The Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association of South Africa (HPBASA), together with its European sister organisation, is hosting the 9th Congress of the European Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association at the Cape Town Convention Centre from 12 to 16 April 2011.

The ASSA together with the HPBASA will hold a joint meeting with SAGES during this event, which will focus on areas of common interest to all the societies that are present.

Leading international experts in the field of hepatobiliary surgery will be present and sharing their knowledge and expertise with the congress delegates. This is a meeting not to be missed.

Source: [ehpba2011.org.za](http://ehpba2011.org.za)